



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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December 28, 2007
FB07-055

NOAA Seeking Public Comments on Amendment to Implement Rebuilding plans for South Atlantic Stocks of Snowy Grouper, Black Sea Bass, and Red Porgy

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) has published a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* for Amendment 15A to the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking public comments on the amendment and associated Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Stock assessments performed through the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review process have revealed that the South Atlantic stocks of snowy grouper, black sea bass, and red porgy are overfished. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to implement rebuilding plans for these overfished species. The purpose of implementing rebuilding plans is to achieve conservation goals and rebuilding the overfished stocks, while minimizing to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic impacts.

Amendment 15A was developed by the Council in order to: 1) Update management reference points for snowy grouper, black sea bass, and red porgy; 2) modify rebuilding strategies for snowy grouper, and black sea bass; 3) define rebuilding strategies for snowy grouper, black sea bass, and red porgy; and 4) redefine the minimum stock size threshold for the snowy grouper stock.

None of the measures included in Amendment 15A involve changes to current regulations; therefore, no proposed or final rule is required at this time. The decision of NOAA Fisheries Service to approve, partially approve, or disapprove this amendment will be based on consideration of comments, recommendations, and information received during the comment period on this NOA.

Request for Comments

Written comments on this amendment must be received no later than 5 p.m., Eastern Time, on February 26, 2008, in order to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. See the **Addresses** section for information on where and how to submit comments.

Addresses

Electronic copies of the NOA, published in the Federal Register on December 28, 2007, may be obtained from the Federal Register Web site at:

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. Copies of the amendment may be obtained from the Council by sending a written request to:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, South Carolina 29405

You may also obtain copies of the amendment by e-mailing safmc@safmc.net, or calling the Council's toll free number: 1-866-SAFMC-10.

Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NOAA Fisheries Service will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

- Mail: Dr. Jack McGovern
NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701
- Fax: 727-824-5308, Attention: Dr. Jack McGovern

How Can We Improve These Fishery Bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve the contents of future fishery bulletins please contact:

Kim Amendola, Communication Specialist,
Phone: 727-551-5707, FAX: 727-824-5320,
e-mail: sero.communications.comments@noaa.gov.

If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, please e-mail us at the address below. You will still receive a hard copy of these bulletins through the mail.

E-mail: sero.communications.comments@noaa.gov
and include:

1. "Request for Electronic Fishery Bulletins" in the subject line.
2. Your preferred e-mail address in the body of the e-mail.

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